

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-19 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the Amendments and Remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

Claim for Priority

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has recognized the Applicants' claim for foreign priority. Because the Applicants' claim for foreign priority has been perfected, no additional action is required from the Applicants at this time.

Drawings

The Examiner has not approved the Formal Drawings submitted by the Applicants. It is respectfully submitted that the drawings comply with the requirements of the USPTO. If the Examiner has any objections to the Formal Drawings he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned as soon as possible so that appropriate action may be taken. No further action is believed to be necessary at this time unless the undersigned receives a notice from the Examiner.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Regarding the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, claim 9 has been amended to clarify that the first and second control panels are mounted on a top part of any one of the drum type washing machine and the dryer as shown in Figures 3 and 5, for example. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Schober. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to control panels for a drum type washing machine and a dryer including a first control panel configured to be mounted on the drum type washing machine or for the dryer, for controlling a cycle of the drum type washing machine or for controlling a cycle of the dryer, respectively. A second control panel is configured to be mounted on the dryer or the drum type washing machine in symmetry with the first control panel in view of an outer appearance, for controlling a cycle of the drum type washing machine or for controlling a cycle of the dryer, respectively. Also included is a first controlling part configured to be connected to either one of the first control panel or the second control panel for controlling an operation of a corresponding one of the drum type washing machine and the dryer according to a user's command, and a second controlling part configured to be connected to the either one of the first control panel or the second control panel for controlling an operation of a corresponding one of the drum type washing machine and the dryer according to a user's command. The first and second control panels are interchangeably mounted on the drum type washing machine and the dryer.

These features are supported at least by Figures 3 and 5 and the corresponding description of the specification. For example, Figure 3 illustrates a first control panel 400 mounted on the washing machine 200 and a second control panel 500 mounted on the dryer 300. As discussed in paragraph [0035] in the specification, if as shown in Figure 4, the positions of the drum type washing machine 200 and the dryer 300 are exchanged, the drum type washing machine 200 and the dryer 300, not only have a poor outer appearance collectively, but also are liable to cause much confusion in using

the drum type washing machine 200 and the dryer 300, even if the drum type washing machine and the dryer are arranged in symmetry. However, according to the present invention, and as shown in Figure 5, if it is desirable to exchange positions of the drum type washing machine 200 and the dryer 300 due to gas pipe connections, etc., the positions of the drum type washing machine 200 and the dryer 300 may be exchanged, and the second controlling part is connected to the first control panel, and the first controlling part is connected to the second control panel. Thus, a collective arrangement of the drum type washing machine 200 and the dryer 300 has the same outer appearance as in Figure 3. That is, the first control panel can be mounted on the drum type washing machine or the dryer for controlling a cycle of the drum type washing machine or for controlling a cycle of the dryer. Similarly, the second control panel may also be mounted on the dryer or the drum type washing machine for controlling a cycle of the drum type washing machine or for controlling a cycle of the dryer, respectively. Thus, the first and second control panels are interchangeable.

On the contrary, the control panels for the washer 10 and dryer 12 in Schober are not interchangeable and are fixed to the respective washer 10 and dryer 12. That is, the control panel for the washer 10 cannot be mounted on the dryer 12 for controlling an operation of dryer 12. Similarly, the control panel for the dryer 12 cannot be mounted on the washer 10 to control an operation of the washer 10.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent claim 1 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably define over Schober.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Schober in view of Cotton. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 10 includes similar features as that discussed above with respect to claim 1. As discussed above, Schober does not teach or suggest first or second control panels that are interchangeable with a drum type washing machine and a dryer. Cotton also does not teach or suggest these features.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted this rejection is also been overcome.

Further, it is respectfully submitted the rejections of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Schober in view of Cotton and Ripley et al. and claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Schober in view of Cotton and Broker et al. have also been overcome as the claims rejected therein are dependent claims and Ripley et al. and Broker et al. also do not teach or suggest the features recited in independent claim 1.

New Claims

In addition, new claims 11-19 have been added to set forth the invention in a varying scope, and Applicants submit the new claims are supported by the originally filed specification. It is respectfully submitted new claims 11-19 are allowable for similar reasons as discussed above.

Specification Change

In addition, the specification has been amended to correct a minor informality. No new matter has been added.

Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination.

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but to merely show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone David A. Bilodeau, Registration No. 42,325 at (703) 205-8072, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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